Title:

English Language Teaching at Senior Secondary Level in Government & Private Schools of Darbhanga

A Synopsis for the Proposed Ph.D. Thesis

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Introduction

English is one of the most spoken languages in the world. In the process of globalization English language plays a pivotal role. It is also considered as *Lingua Franca* which helps to connect people all over the world. It provides easy access to the world's rich literature, science and technology, social media and an ever-growing number of books, periodicals and newspapers. Most of the official and corporate-activities are organized in English language. English is used as common and official language in every sector. Every document is written in English language. In the present scenario, most of the official and non-official discussions and discourses are administered in English. It is not the language but the people who wish to communicate effectively, use English. People are the actors who make English the convention of international discourse.

To remain connected in the global context and to become a part of developed community we need to master ourselves in one single language that is English. It steers up the process of development in any nation. Its importance increases much in Indian context which is the land of diversity with a number of different languages. So, it is practically not possible for a person to learn every language of different regions within India. Therefore, English serves as the bridge in communicating with people of different areas speaking different languages. English has a special status in India; it's an official language after Hindi. English in India was introduced with the coming of British. It was Lord Macaulay's Minute of 1935 that resulted in the English Education Act (1835) and continued even after the independence. As a result, in schools, colleges, and universities of India the English language has received more attention during last few decades.

The first book in English was neither written by a South Indian, nor a Punjabi, nor a Gujarati, nor a scholar of the Northeast; it was written by a Bihari. It was Sheikh Din Muhammad (Sake Din Mahomed) of Patna who published his book *The Travels of Dean Mahomet* in 1784 in English at the mere age of twenty-five. It is quite unfortunate that now English has become a problematic language for students and teachers in both lower and higher education system in Bihar. English was studied as a major subject in Bihar till 1960s. It was in the late half of the 1960s when the Education Ministry (Karpoori Thakur) and Government of Bihar made English subject as non-compulsory for matriculation curriculum. Hence, thereafter the quality of English learning

witnessed a sharp fall in the government schools of Bihar at both secondary and senior secondary levels. Moreover, students in Bihar are more bothered about mathematics, science, social science and so on. They generally acquire good knowledge and even score good marks in these subjects except English. English as a subject is given less importance in schools and this is the prime reason for failure of learners to use it fluently for speaking and writing purposes. Keeping in view the concern for English language and its negligence at secondary and senior secondary level posses a big question. Thereby, this research will examine and investigate the major problems of ELT at senior secondary level of a district of Bihar, Darbhanga.

Review of Literature

Many researchers have tried to work out different issues on English teaching and learning and there are many works written on this line. Some of the important works that are reviewed by the researcher are described below.

Sheorey (2006) in *Learning and Teaching English in India* extensively writes about the beliefs of Indian students and college teachers about English language learning. In his book he explored the Indian Students' Theories of Learning English as a Second language. He found that "…Students bring to the language classroom a variety of attitudes, experiences and strategies as well as a variety of beliefs or, what Hosenfeld (1978) aptly terms "mini theories" and Sigel (1990) defines as "mental constructions of experience."(p.27)

Qahtani (2003) in *Introducing the Target Culture to Develop the Socio-Linguistics Competence of EFL Students; Views and Attitudes of Saudi EFL Teachers at Selected Male Secondary Schools in Riyad* measured the relative effectiveness of teaching English language using direct method, communicative approach and bilingual method for learning of English among XI standard students. The findings of the study were i. the communicative approach proved to be better suited for teaching English to the students of XI class. ii. Students taught through the direct method showed higher achievement in English language as compared to those students taught through the grammar translation method.

Mondal (2012) surveyed the English Teachers' Attitude Towards Grammar-Translation Method at Secondary Education: Bangladeshi Context. The study revealed that teachers were generally comfortable with this language teaching method offered in secondary level education in Bangladesh and teachers agreed that GTM was very much important in Bangladeshi perspective for learning English in the present time because for Bangladeshi pupils English is also a second language so it is clear that they also face difficulty while learning language. Teachers reported that grammar translation method in secondary school syllabus helped the students obtaining the perfect knowledge of grammar and translation by which the students can learn English well for career and personal growth.

Byram (2004) in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Language Teaching and Learning* highlighted the basic elements in language teacher education curriculum and also asserted that language acquisition which is basically skills acquisition "deeply influences language teaching and teacher education". He further stressed that "learning styles (Duda and Riley. 1990), learning strategies, attitudes, motivation, aptitude and social background play very important roles. Since skills acquisition depends on action, something has to be done with the language, and it has to be done in a meaningful context in order to begin to master it. It is also beneficial to reflect on what teachers' have done while communicating, whether their actions have been effective or ineffective and why.

Golam & Tatsuya (2018) in *A Qualitative Study of English Teaching in Bangladesh: A Case Study of Madrasa Education* found that Madrasa teachers' training for English language learning is required urgently. They also highlight that curriculum and teachers' recruitment need to be reformed.

Hoque (2008) in *English Language Teaching and Learning at the Alim Level in Madrasas in Bangladesh: Problems and Possible Solutions* found that major concerns for the Madrasa education are untrained teachers and lack of resources, teaching methodologies and curriculum.

Husain & Pandey (2022) in English Language Teaching in Bihar: Secondary Education and Challenges highlighted majority of schools do not have English teacher, even teachers are not trained in proper way to teach English, therefore teacher training is the utmost need. They further point out that teachers use Grammar Translation Method to teach the English language in the classroom and classroom is overcrowded. Moreover, government secondary schools in Bihar do not have good set up of language laboratory. And somehow government policy is also responsible for the failure of effective English Language Teaching at the senior secondary schools.

Objectives

1. To examine relationship between socio-economic backgrounds of the students with their English language proficiency.

2. To assess the English language proficiency of the students of senior secondary level in government & private schools.

3. To find out the influence of technology in language learning.

4. To examine the attitudes of students towards English language & its impact.

5. To examine the problems faced by both students and teachers in ELT & suggest probable remedial measures.

Hypothesis

The following hypotheses are formulated to empirically validate the above objectives.

1. Methods, techniques, and concept enhance English Language Teaching at senior secondary level.

2. Students at private schools have a better knowledge of English.

3. Use of language lab improves pronunciation.

Methodology

The study will be based on Quantitative & Qualitative methodologies. The researcher will select 8 senior secondary schools where English is taught as a subject. It will cover 4 private & 4 government schools; 30 students will be selected randomly for the study from each school in Darbhanga. The sample size for primary survey will be 250 which will include 240 students (i.e. 120 from government & 120 from private schools) and 10 teachers (i.e. 5 from government & 5 private teachers). The study will be based on Purposive Sampling and data will be collected through:

1. Questionnaire (Close Ended)
2. Likert Scale Scaling Technique
3. Observation
4. Interview (informal & open ended)

For analysis of data, most appropriate statistical tools will be used.

Significance of the Study

This study will explore the advantages and limitations of English Language Teaching (ELT) at secondary government and private schools of Darbhanga. Such study has not been conducted earlier. The study will suggest the probable solutions to the existing problems so that the gap of English language proficiency between public & private schools can be reduced. The research will help the government of Bihar to revisit its policies and bring some reform at both district and state levels. For the improvement of ELT, it will also unfold the areas of research in academics in Bihar and India. The present study is important and an essential requirement of the present time.

Limitations of the Study

The research covers small population of students and teachers in Darbhanga. This study is confined to a selected secondary government and private schools of Darbhanga. As different schools have different challenges similarly different district has different challenges in Bihar. Thus, its finding may not be valid across the schools or board in all the districts of Bihar and India.

Tentative Chapterisation

1. Introduction
2. Review of Literature and Theoretical Framework
3. Research Methodology and Standardization of Tests
4. Data Analysis and Discussion
5. Conclusion, and Suggestions

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